

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY "E-NEWS"  
Iowa DNR Vol. 1, #1, October, 2002

THE TIMES, THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

With apologies to Bob Dylan, I'll borrow that song title to introduce our new electronic newsletter. Iowa DNR's Wildlife Diversity Program (WDP) is nothing, if not flexible. At one time our tiny program published a nice, fairly regular, hard-copy newsletter and mailed it to a large list of interested readers. But budgets declined, time was short, and last year we mailed a single issue to a pared-down subscriber list. The continuing state budget crisis has now all but eliminated the luxury of publishing even a single issue.

Taking a cue from some other organizations, we recently decided to try an electronic newsletter ("e-news") and distribute it to our email address list for CARA-supporters, and another new address list currently being assembled (more on CARA later). We are doing this in simple email text format, rather than attaching a document, to avoid virus concerns and readability variations for your particular computer. So this is an official welcome to our venture into a new newsletter format. We hope you will understand why we chose this format and we also hope you will enjoy some updates on the WDP and its projects.

One note of caution is warranted. Some individuals and agencies receiving this may forward it to others through various list servers. If you received this e-news via a list serve and do not wish to continue receiving it, please do not contact us about having your name removed from the mailing list. We have no knowledge of what list servers this may be passed through, so you will have to deal with the manager of your particular list server.

Now, on to some other changes of possible interest. Jim Zohrer, former WDP State Coordinator, took an early retirement on Feb. 1, and I was appointed to fill Jim's old job in March. Shortly afterwards, long-time WDP Natural Resource Technician Bruce Ehresman was promoted to the position of State Program Biologist. Pat Schlarbaum, another long-dedicated WDP Natural Resource Technician, remains with the program, remarkably having survived a life-threatening fall from a roof last winter. We are most fortunate and thankful to have Pat back in the WDP Team and working--as usual--at full throttle! Finally, this summer we filled Bruce's old position with Mark "Mac" McInroy. Mac comes to WDP from previous positions with DNR Fisheries and Forestry Bureaus. He is another bundle of energy for the program, and we are extremely fortunate to having some "youth" added to the WDP's aging ranks. Last, but not least, Ron Andrews, DNR Wildlife Research Biologist from Clear Lake, continues assisting WDP with at least one-quarter of his time and is ably assisted by Dave Hoffman with the WDP's Trumpeter Swan Project

The remainder of this first e-news issue will bring you up to date on WDP projects and programs, some old, some new. Please send us the email addresses of folks who might wish to be added to our mailing list. You may contact [pat.schlarbaum@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:pat.schlarbaum@dnr.state.ia.us) with new subscriber addresses.

DOUG HARR  
WDP STATE COORDINATOR

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IOWA: A PLACE TO SEE EAGLES  
By Bruce Ehresman

Fall bird migration is well under way, and we are heading into that portion of the year when the number of eagles pouring into Iowa begins to grow. Most of us who have been around for awhile are very aware of how special it now is to be able to see eagles in Iowa year around. For about 70 years, Iowa had no nesting eagles. Because of the passage of protective laws and a change in public attitude toward our

birds of prey, we have changed that trend. In 2002, Wildlife Diversity Program staff estimates that there are, conservatively, 140 bald eagle nests in at least 59 Iowa counties. This year, at least 26 new eagle nests were reported for Iowa, and first reports were received for Clay, Chickasaw, Monona, and Tama counties.

Our thanks to the many volunteers who report their observations of eagle nests to us, and we are especially grateful to the volunteers who brave the cold January weather each year to help with the Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. I mentioned earlier that this is the time of year that eagles can be seen arriving in Iowa to spend the fall and winter months. Iowa's reputation as a good place to spend the winter must be growing, because the number of bald eagles, which are seen each winter, has grown dramatically within the last 20 years. The Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey is actually part of a national survey to keep track of the health of our bald eagle population. The survey has been conducted for about 40 years. Data collected from this survey has been instrumental in providing information that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service used to place the bald eagle on the Federal Endangered Species List. More recent data will undoubtedly be used to eventually remove the bald eagle from this list.

Fluctuations in the count from year-to-year are due, in part, to variable weather conditions. For example, in January 2001, extremely cold weather conditions caused eagles to be concentrated along the rivers where the majority of our survey routes occur. Consequently, most of the bald eagles that were in Iowa at that time were probably counted. In 2002, the opposite occurred. Mild weather allowed bald eagles to be spread out throughout the state, since rivers were not frozen and eagles had access to their favorite prey - fish. Since eagles were spread out, many could not be counted on our designated survey routes. This is why we do surveys for many years and then look at overall trends seen in the survey data. Otherwise, comparing one year to the next, it might appear that we are experiencing major population declines or growth, which really aren't happening.

The extraordinary comeback of the bald eagle as an Iowa nester is a tribute to what humans can do to reverse the fate of a wildlife species that we persecuted and abused to the point of near oblivion. I think that we also can use the eagle's story as a reminder to us that it is far easier (and less expensive) to attempt to "keep common species common" by each of us being a responsible environmental steward - now! Once again, we thank all of you who are doing your part to make Iowa a "wilder" environment and a good place to see bald eagles!

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## PEREGRINE FALCON UPDATE

By Pat Schlarbaum

In 2002 a milestone of sorts occurred in respect to Peregrine Falcon nesting in Iowa. When releases were begun in Cedar Rapids in 1989 a goal of five nesting pairs was established. This year six falcon territories were reported with five sites successfully fledging young.

At Cedar Rapids four-year-old female \*S/\*5 (fledged from Des Moines '98), nesting here for the third time, and thirteen-year-old male 64X (hacked from Des Moines '91, identified previously as 64T), here for the tenth year, produced four eggs, hatched three and fledged two females and a male. These birds were banded by Macbride Raptor Project and assisted at the site by Steve Atherton's wildlife management students from Kirkwood Community College.

The Des Moines pair (female is R13 Kansas City '89 and the male is T93 Cedar Rapids '89) once again laid three eggs on the eastside of the American Republic Insurance bldg. However, the eggs disappeared as hatch date drew near. In late June an egg was discovered on the westside of building which hatched. A lone male was banded July 30, and successfully fledged in early August. Staff led by Paul Burkett from American Republic Insurance and Jane Clark, Des Moines Audubon, assist in monitoring the site.

Bob Anderson, Raptor Resource Project reported the Lansing cliff site was active in 2002 and successfully fledged two young, a male and a female. The adult female X/\*D (fledged '98 at NSP Sherco,

Becker, MN) here for the first time, paired with five-year-old male \*T/M (fledged '97 Prairie Isle, MN) nesting here for the fourth year. The falcon box on the bluff, across from the Alliant Energy plant placed by Bob Anderson, was a suitable backdrop as historic falcon banders gathered to assist and witness event. It had been 44 years since Dan Berger, Jack Oar, Jim Grier, Jack Oberg, Dave Seal, and Chuck Sindelar banded falcons at historic eyries. This year they were assisted by Dave Kester, banding two young. These individuals are affectionately referred to as "gaboons" in noted ornithologist Francis Hammerstram's books. They assisted the Hammerstrams in their wildlife efforts a half century ago.

In the Quad Cities the pair that previously occupied the Centennial Bridge nested in a falcon box placed by falconer, Tom Deckert. Three-year-old female 8/\*E (hacked in '99 at Muncie, Indiana) paired with three-year-old male P/D (hacked in '99 at Dubuque, Iowa). The MidAmerican Energy staff, Joe Bannon and Dave Sebben hosted three young, two females and a male in downtown Davenport. All successfully fledged with minimal intervention from humans.

Jim Haack also with MidAmerican Energy reported a new falcon site this year. Jim had coordinated the release of 18 falcons 1998 - 2000 at the Louisa Generating Station near Muscatine. A box affixed by Bob Anderson to the smokestack was used. The female Z/V (fledged in '99 at NSP Riverside, Minneapolis, MN) mated with a tiercel that has not been identified. One young male successfully fledged.

A sixth falcon territory occurred at the Holnam Cement Plant at Mason City. Falconer Lowell Washburn who hacked 25 young from the site between 1996 - 1998, reported a male was seen intermittently throughout the summer.

Also in 2002 eight young falcons were released at the Duane Arnold nuclear facility near Palo, Iowa. Bob Anderson with Raptor Research Project coordinated the placement of four young. Meanwhile four young at a smokestack box near Alma, Minnesota were stranded when an untimely death of the adult male occurred at that site. Also, a few days later, the female was discovered injured and unable to provide for young. The young were relocated to the Palo site and all eight successfully fledged thanks to Anderson's efforts. A big thank you goes out to all those assisting with the falcons' return to Iowa skies!

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#### DNR COURTYARD WATER FEATURE AT STATE FAIRGROUNDS:

A new look gives us something to reflect upon.

By Mark McInroy

After many years of the same old look, the DNR courtyard takes on several additions at once. Waste management added an interpretive trailer, Parks and Rec adds a stage for specific presentations, and the Diversity team adds a water garden/feature in the long neglected butterfly garden. Now the fair is behind us and another project is completed, but not without the compilation of many efforts along the way. Over 20 people contributed to this water garden that is already a major attraction in the DNR courtyard. I am proud to have been a part of it and that it finished so well. In fact things went so well, we are beginning ideas of improvements and additions to it for next year that we did not have time for this year.

This feature began as a need to inform public of the basic biological needs for wildlife in the backyard: food, shelter, and water. Fellow WDP'er, Pat Schlarbuam, indicated specifically the need to point out the often forgotten wildlife need- water. Of course, the most simple and straightforward presentation of water is a bird bath. However, like a masterful Broadway producer, Pat took this notion further and gathered all the necessary powers that be, and the brainstorming "flowed" into the idea of a water garden with a stream. And this is where I got on board, I guess to 'direct' the show into the attraction and spectacle it became. What a team effort, and what pride everyone should feel. A water garden is certainly the most creative, effective, and fun way to incorporate water into a backyard landscape. Not to mention the many residual and indirect benefits they offer as well: conversation, entertainment, friendly gathering site, serenity.

One of the very capable people that Pat got on board is Jamie Beyer of Midwest Waterscapes. Jamie not only designed and consulted this project, but also logged in several hours voluntarily. We got started a bit late, but still finished well and on time. There were several main goals when we started this project,

main priority being budget of course. We were fortunate to complete the project at a relatively low cost. One thing I would like to point out is the degree of difficulty involved when trying to do a project of this size both cheap and fast. Something has to give, and the giving came from many wonderful people and businesses.

Over 350 collective man/women hours went into this feature, over a third of which was on volunteer basis from Jamie Beyer, Rob Pritchard, Iowa DOT, Hamilton CCB, State Fair Maintenance crew, Glory McInroy, Mike McInroy, Jeff Breit, and Todd Amsden. Not to mention the several DNR employees that went over and above the call of duty.

This was a unique and "groundbreaking" opportunity for me to meet many generous and community minded individuals. This type of consideration is highly valued and seemingly harder to find. I anticipate the opportunity to reciprocate. With that being said I personally would like to extend special thanks to the following material and equipment use donations collectively valued at over \$3400:

- Wayne and Tony Blue, Hamilton Co. landowners/farmers: for the Iowa field rock
- Iowa Outdoor Products: for the liner and pump
- Liquid Landscape Designers: for select rock and stream built
- Midwest Waterscapes: for the insight
- Des Moines Feed and Garden: for the bog material
- Larry Fleck Trucking: for the dirt
- Iowa DOT: for the trucking
- Hamilton County Conservation Board: for your time and loader
- Lowe's: for the bridge material
- John Rowley: for the bridge construction

Certainly this project started as a way to stress the importance of making water available in your backyard. We did it in the most elaborate and grandiose way possible, but you can do it as simple as a bird bath or "upside down garbage can lid". However, the next time you are brainstorming an addition to your backyard landscape, maybe consider incorporating the presentation of water in the creative, diverse, and serene form of a water garden. For questions, ideas, or contacts feel free to call on me, Mark McInroy (Mac), at 515-432-2823, or email [mark.mcInroy@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:mark.mcInroy@dnr.state.ia.us)

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## WDP GETS SOME FEDERAL FUNDS

By Doug Harr

Since the 9-11 tragedy, Conservation And Restoration Act (CARA) progress in Congress has slowed to a stop, and there's not much hope for any immediate passage. However, two annual appropriations have helped keep nongame wildlife programs across the country afloat.

Iowa DNR was allocated two pots of money, about \$605,000 for FY01 and \$976,000 for FY02. Both federal allotments are problematic, because they require that the state match 25% to get the FY01 money and 50% for the FY02 funds. With the state budget crisis, DNR has virtually no money to put up the match. But as stated in my introductory article, we're nothing if not flexible. We're entering some good private partnerships to capture as much as possible of those federal dollars. What follows are some exciting things already accomplished and some we hope to shortly.

In April DNR used these so-called "CARA-Lite" funds to purchase a 240-acre addition to the Kellerton Bird Conservation Area in Ringgold County. A grant from FMC Corporation, funneled through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, permitted that important purchase of Prairie-chicken habitat.

Presently underway are (hopefully) final negotiations on some land we hope to restore and manage specifically for shorebirds. If completed, Pheasants Forever and two Audubon Society chapters will help

with the match money. In Lucas County, we're working to acquire important migratory woodland songbird habitat adjacent to the Cedar Creek Unit of Stephens State Forest, with the National Wild Turkey Federation our probable match partner. Another tract of forest in Davis County is also in the works. In O'Brien County, we're partnering with The Nature Conservancy and O'Brien County Sportsmen's Club to acquire an extremely critical addition to Waterman Prairie. The site holds valuable migratory habitat for Bald Eagles, and there's evidence of Barn Owls in the neighborhood. In Dickinson County, we will partner with Ducks Unlimited, the Iowa Natural Heritage foundation and others to secure more than 600 acres at the incredible Spring Run Wetlands Complex, soon to become Iowa's third official Bird Conservation Area. Other acquisition projects are under consideration.

WDP will also use these federal dollars to help fund important nongame research projects. The first is a pilot study on Iowa's growing bobcat population. In partnership with ISU's Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Unit, a study of bird use of grasslands at the Spring Run Wetlands Complex should begin next year. And, also with the ISU's Coop Research Unit and the Top of Iowa Wind Farm as partners, pioneering research will study effects of a wind generating farm near Rice Lake on songbirds, bats and waterfowl using nearby public wildlife areas.

Other ideas still being discussed include a possible publication about Iowa birds, continued funding assistance for Trumpeter Swan restoration, assistance with ISU Extension's NatureMapping program, and perhaps even a new small grants program available to individuals or organizations.

The down side of this rather bright picture is that Chickadee Checkoff funds, upon which WDP depends, have continued to decline in recent years. In closing, I'd encourage all of our many WDP friends to contribute to the WDP program on your Iowa 1040 form next spring. For those of you who have done so in the past, we are truly appreciative of your generous support!

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## SANDHILL CRANES RETURN TO IOWA

By Pat Schlarbaum

Prior to European settlement of Iowa, Sandhill Cranes probably were a common nesting species and abundant migrants throughout Iowa. As early as 1820, Edwin James saw large flocks of cranes migrating north along the Missouri River in Harrison County. Even in the 1890's, it was not uncommon to see flocks of hundreds or even thousands of cranes in Winnebago and Hancock Counties in spring. Although there are few specific records, Sandhill Cranes probably were fairly common nesters in north-central and northwest Iowa. With settlement, the combination of unregulated hunting and loss of nesting habitat led to a rapid disappearance of nesting cranes from Iowa. The last Sandhill Crane nesting of that era was at the headwaters of the Iowa River near Hayfield in Hancock County in May 1894. As was common in those days, the eggs were taken for an egg collection.

Cranes nest in shallow wetlands with dense vegetation. They create a nest mound by pulling up marsh plants and laying one to three eggs that hatch in late spring. About three months after hatching the young (called colts) begin to fly, but the brownish-colored young remain with their parents throughout their first winter. Cranes eat waste grain, seeds, berries, roots, tubers, snakes, frogs, crayfish, worms and insects.

By the early 1900s, even migrating Sandhill Cranes were rare in Iowa. For the next 60 years, there are very few reports of cranes in Iowa. Throughout the Midwest, problems similar to Iowa's caused Sandhill Crane populations to dwindle. Just a few dozen pairs remained in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan through the 1940s. During the 1970s and 1980s, however, nesting populations increased in the northern states, and a few migrating sandhills were seen in Iowa.

The number of Sandhill Cranes reported in Iowa increased greatly in the late 1970s and 1980s (Dinsmore

1989), culminating in their return as a nesting species. Nesting birds derive from populations in Wisconsin, which increased greatly in the 1970s and 1980s (Robbins 1992) and eventually spilled over into Iowa. These birds winter in Florida and Georgia. The huge flocks that gather in central Nebraska nest in the Arctic. Those flocks are probably the source of most cranes seen in western Iowa (Kent and Dinsmore 1996).

In 1992, after a 98-year absence, Sandhill Cranes successfully nested in Iowa at Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area in Tama County. Two colts were produced. In 1993, cranes also attempted to nest at a second area at Green Island along the Mississippi River in Jackson County, however due to annual flooding, young were not produced at that site until 1997. In the mean time cranes at Sweet Marsh became established and successfully nested, beginning in 1994. The Sweet Marsh flock has grown to include four other sites in Bremer Co.

In 2002, Sandhill cranes were observed in four new sites. Reports were received of cranes sited in Clinton and Chickasaw County. Allamakee County picked up another site where young were produced, and in western Iowa, young were produced in Woodbury County. Cranes have been included in bird counts in at least 16 counties during the year. Thanks to all contributing to the crane survey each April coordinated by the International Crane Foundation at Baraboo, Wisconsin. Summer sightings of Sandhill Cranes and young are highly prized as reports increase in Iowa. These magnificent birds exhibit all the work going into wetland protection and construction throughout the state. May sights and sounds of cranes come to your homes and communities soon.

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## WHAT THREAT IS THE WEST NILE VIRUS?

by Bruce Ehresman

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease that was first detected in this country in 1999 in the New York City area. The virus has spread rapidly and has already been detected as far west as California. It first appeared in Iowa last year and has now been documented in all counties except Allamakee. The crow family (i.e. crows, jays, and magpies) seems to be most susceptible of the birds, although 111 species of birds have now been documented with the disease. Mosquitoes appear to be the primary means of transmission of the virus between birds and to humans.

According to Kathryn Converse, a wildlife specialist with the U.S Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin, hundreds of birds of prey, especially great-horned owls and red-tailed hawks, have been found dead in the upper Midwest. Licensed Iowa wildlife rehabilitators have already documented receiving at least 30 sick great-horned owls and about a dozen red-tailed hawks that appear to be infected with the virus. Necropsies of dead raptors (at the Madison Wildlife Health Center and at the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Ames) have confirmed the disease in several great-horned owls and red-tailed hawks, as well as in a Cooper's hawk and a red-shouldered hawk.

Of particular concern to those of us who work with wildlife is the effect of this disease on our rarer birds - like bald eagles, trumpeter swans, and peregrine falcons. But as far as I know, there has been no documentation of WNV in the peregrine, only one documented case (in the country) of an infected bald eagle, and no known cases in Iowa trumpeter swans. Judging by the number of phone calls wildlife agency employees are receiving about dead or dying birds, it appears that there have been, at least, hundreds of bird deaths in Iowa this year from WNV. Since very few dead birds have been tested for presence of the disease, it is difficult to say just how many birds and which species have been affected. Kathryn Converse pointed out that, at this point, "we don't know of any birds that can't be affected by the virus."

Since there is no known effective vaccine developed yet for birds, people or institutions that have captive

bird populations housed outdoors are advised to install mosquito netting. I agree that this is a good idea, since my wife and I recently lost our unprotected captive red-shouldered hawk and prairie merlin to WNV.

Birds affected with this virus often act dazed, and in a more advanced stage, WNV causes the bird to have tremors and even seizures. According to Dr. Pat Redig, of the University of Minnesota's Raptor Center, he knows of no bird, so far, that has recovered fully from this disease. Once birds exhibit symptoms of the disease, most die. On a more positive note, there is the expectation that surviving birds will become resistant to this virus over time. It is also anticipated that this disease is not going to have a severe impact on our rarer bird species, since this disease has caused no massive die-offs of birds - mainly isolated cases.

Since the main mosquito types that transmit this disease are the ones found in people's back yards, people are encouraged to eliminate all possible mosquito breeding grounds where they live. Change the water in bird baths and dog water bowls frequently, and empty any container of stagnant water. And don't forget to protect yourself from biting mosquitoes. Even though only about 1% of us who are bit by a WNV infected mosquito are going to develop severe symptoms, that is still reason enough to be careful.

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## OSPREY RESTORATION

By Pat Schlarbaum

Osprey, commonly called the fish hawk or fish eagle, is neither a true hawk nor eagle. Ospreys are cosmopolitan and occur worldwide with the exception of Antarctica. The species is of ancient lineage and presently is classified near the kite family. There are four subspecies presently recognized, two occurring in North America, P.L. carolinenses and P.L. ridgwayi. Ridgwayi is found in the Bahamas and Caribbean, while carolinensis is the Midwestern species. Carolinensis is migratory in its northern range and resides in south Florida and possibly part of the Gulf coast and northwest Mexico.

Ospreys were never confirmed to historically nest in Iowa, but were probably here given the abundance of lakes and wetlands that dotted the prairie. Ospreys are very unwary birds and territorially appear weak. Pairs will nest colonially. Nests may be upon structure, manmade or natural, that provides a platform, but Ospreys have been known to nest on the ground. Nests are generally at least one-foot deep and four to five feet wide, are made of sticks and lined with grass. Highest productivity is attained on power poles and nesting platforms.

Ospreys were heavily affected by the biocide crash of the 1950s. Populations were severely reduced throughout the range but hardest hit in the Great Lakes and Atlantic coast. A strong fidelity to ancestral breeding areas slowed range expansion into vacant and newly created habitat since the DDT era.

With construction of lakes by Department of Natural Resources and reservoirs by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, potential osprey habitat exists that was previously not available. There are numerous osprey summer sightings in Iowa, but apparently these young, non-breeding ospreys return to northern areas for mating and nesting. Despite this population growth, ospreys have demonstrated little breeding range expansion. Minnesota and Wisconsin DNR officials suggest that ospreys, in our lifetime, do not readily pioneer new breeding ranges. Instead they experience suppressed reproduction as density of breeders increases. To address this issue, young ospreys from Wisconsin and Minnesota are being relocated to areas with suitable habitat in southern Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Ohio.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has assisted conservation partners with technical assistance, encouragement, and fish to successfully release ospreys in Iowa. The Macbride Raptor Project located near Coralville Reservoir has spearheaded this work. Beginning in 1997 four or five young ospreys have been released annually at their facility. Since that time, personnel at the Hartman Reserve Nature Center in Cedar Falls initiated a release at their facility in 1998. Staff of Boone County Conservation Board and

Polk County Conservation Board coordinated a release at Saylorville Reservoir in 2000. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has provided distinguished service for releases at Coralville and Saylorville Reservoir respectively. Assisted by literally hundreds of volunteers, these conservation organizations have devoted their efforts to bring ospreys to Iowa as a nesting species. A four-year minimum commitment of releasing ospreys is required at each site. Project fundraising is the responsibility of the conservation organizations doing the releases. Ospreys cost about \$500 per bird.

In Iowa, ospreys have two bands, a silver U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service band and a numbered, lavender band on separate legs. Forty-eight ospreys have been released at the three sites since 1997.

Beginning in 2000 Osprey released at Heron Lake in SW Minnesota by Minnesota DNR, built a nest atop a microwave tower near Cayler Prairie in NW Iowa. In late winter Great-horned Owls were seen at the nest and tending young, however by April the Ospreys were once again nesting at the site. Incubation appeared to be progressing, but ultimately the nesting attempt failed. It was believed extremely violent storms were a factor in the demise of the nesting attempt. A second pair was also observed nest building in the Spirit Lake area. At Coralville reservoir a 1998 released Osprey was nest building with two other unidentified adult Osprey. The adults were seen feeding the year-class of 2001.

In 2002 Ed Thelen with DNR Fisheries reported an Osprey pair nesting on a platform at the outdoor classroom area of Spirit Lake school. Tim Waltz with DNR Big Sioux Wildlife unit coordinated the pole/platform placement at the school. In early July a single egg was discovered by Ed Heidenbrink and Don Poggensee, but no young were produced at the site. Also on a pole/platform near Cayler Prairie a nest was constructed at that site by an unidentified Osprey pair.

At Coralville reservoir a nest was constructed by A5 (Macbride 1998) and an unbanded female. These birds were joined by H2 (2000 Saylorville) feeding young hacked birds. Four Wisconsin osprey were placed at the site. However, two young died from heat stress prior to release.

At Saylorville a pair of wild birds E4 (Hartman 2000) and E1 (Macbride 2000) appeared at the site, causing excitement and strafing released birds. Five additional osprey were hacked from the site this year. Volunteer coordinator Sue Davis and naturalists Missy King and Joe Boyles are working with many volunteers to enable Osprey to make central Iowa their home.

Also this year staff and volunteers at Hartman Reserve Nature Center released four additional Osprey. Nature Center director Vern Fish and volunteer coordinator Amber Shinn feel optimistic that 2003 will be their year for Osprey nesting to return to the Cedar River watershed.

A big THANK YOU goes out to all those involved with bringing Osprey to Iowa!